

How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! (i) (Quality: very good)

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Preacher: Woodhams, Raymond (1933-2014)

[0 : 00] Depending upon the Lord for help and for your prayerful attention, I direct it this morning to Psalm 139 and reading verse 17.

Psalm 139 verse 17.

How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God, which is the sum of them.

This is the psalmist who said, O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me.

Can you say that this morning? O Lord, thou hast searched me. I believe this, my friend, that those whom the Lord does search, it is that life divine, is it not?

[1 : 24] That quickening power. Surely it is that soul that is born again. Yet truly the Lord did search King Saul of old in an outward way.

But here we did never heard a soul say, How precious also are thy thoughts unto me.

There may be souls here this morning fearing that because the Lord has searched them and has made known to them that their substance has ever been abated for them.

I say, how precious are thy thoughts. It doesn't say, how precious are my thoughts.

But my friend, it is how precious are thy thoughts. That God should ever look upon us to search us, to quicken us again, to put forth his almighty power, and say to us as an individual, thus far and no further.

[3 : 00] O Lord, thou hast searched me. Why David truly said in Psalm 51, Search me, O God, and see if there be any wicked way in me.

Create in me, O God, a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me. Friend, could you bear everybody in this place today to know all your secret sins and secret thoughts?

You say, well, it's been published and everybody knows about me and everything. I can't go into that place again.

Nobody will speak to me. Nobody will want to know me. Friend, I'll go run away and hide myself. But that is not so, is it?

They don't know. But remember this, God does know. God knows indeed what you have said.

[4 : 18] God knows what you have done. God knows what you indeed are intending to do. Whether it be right or wrong, my friend, think of this.

But in spite of all that, we have to say, how precious also are thy thoughts unto me.

Precious into this end, he knows that by nature, that we are rotten to the core, according to his most holy law.

there may be some who do not approve of me using such strong language as that. But this one thing I know, how precious are those thoughts that have opened up to us what we are and what we need.

You see, if a thing is rotten to the core, there is no hope for it. It is only fit to be buried or cast into the compost heap.

It is beyond any use whatsoever. But my friend, not so with God. Because he is he that has said ye must be born again.

[5 : 53] now I want to go back just a little in this psalm where he speaks of his my substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

There he speaks of the birth or the creation of a child in the womb. Oh, there alone those nine months and there God watching over that fetus all that time recording, seeing, viewing day by day all those developments and the developments that are so needed.

Nobody else knows about it. The mother may feel it, but my friend, God sees it and he saw us being developed in such a way as this, my substance.

He knew it right from the beginning. thing. Oh, a solemn thought it is. Why is it such a solemn thought?

Everybody rejoices when the baby is born and brought forth. Everybody wants to hold it and to cuddle it. Do they not?

[7 : 40] Yes, as substance by nature, but God, my friend, sees it deeper than that. He sees our substance by nature as that has fallen and so we are born in sin and shaped in iniquity.

The substance within us is not in favour of God. No, but it is the substance within us of the devil himself.

how solemn that is. And the word of God tells us that we were born in sin and shaped in iniquity and we came forth from the womb speaking lies.

God, my friend, has never approved of lies. He has never approved of this. And yet the psalms could say how precious are thy thoughts.

God, my friend, did not cut us off then. He did not send us down to hell. But has thus far in mercy governed that space of a time of repentance wherein he alone can convert and change that very being.

[9 : 21] Oh, that substance. Oh, do I hear one say today, creating me, oh God, a clean heart and renew a right spirit within me.

I say, is there not that substance within them that believes and realises the great need of change and the work of the Holy Spirit?

Friend, the work and the facts of sin are passed on from parents to the child. But that is not so with regards to Christ.

No, it's not. Let none of us think here this day that we can inherit eternal salvation.

Let none of us think that we can inherit an acceptable nature. We cannot.

[10 : 29] That's not with God as substance by nature is fallen, it is ruined. But oh, to inherit substance through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ.

So, the psalmist here is referring to our condition. He said, Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect, and in thy book all my members were written.

When he says in thy book all my members were written, the illustration of a book, God knows he does not need like we do, a book as such, but it is a record, everything is recorded by him, and he knows all things.

He does not need that to be referred unto, because he himself is holy, and he is pure.

Therefore, he said, yet being imperfect, oh, yet being so ruined, yet being indeed so condemned, all my members are written, he still has complete control over me, and all that functions physically within me.

[12 : 14] And I say that with caution, physically, because we can't say, he has control, or he controls our sin, our fallen nature, no.

Satan, my friend, he does indeed control it. Our God indeed does put forth his almighty hand, and suppresses it.

We will be thankful for that, my friend, what a mercy, that all our members, he understands, hands, and that all his wonderful truth, that he should have mercy upon us in unregeneracy.

That hymn, I think it's 723, comes to my mind, indulgent God, how kind, are all thy ways to me, it's gone for me now, no, that's right, 732, indulgent God, how kind, are all thy ways to me, whose dark benighted mind was enmity with thee, yet now, subdued by sovereign grace, my spirit longs for his embrace, how precious are thy thoughts, which o'er my bosom roll, they swell beyond my thoughts, and captivate my soul, how great they're some, how high they rise, can never known beneath the skies, preserved in

Jesus when my feet made haste to hell, and there should I have gone, but thou didst all things well, thy love was great, thy mercy free, which from the pit delivered me, a monument of grace, a sinner saved by grace, the streams of love I trace, up to the fountain God, and in his wondrous mercy see, eternal thoughts of love to me, friend, how precious are thy thoughts, what a mercy if the Lord will bring us into the full assurance of the contents of the last verse, a monument of grace, a monument of grace, so the psalm says, how precious also are thy thoughts unto me, it's not just what thou hast known about me, and done for me, but that now it is disclosed unto me, and poor needy sin, and those thoughts are so precious, that he sought upon me, it saw me, ruined in the fall, and loved me not withstanding all.

[16 : 05] Now there may be some here saying, I'm only what I am in religion, because I was brought up in a God fearing family, whether they be right, or whether they be wrong.

Oh, let me just put a word of caution here, is that where all your religion ends and begins and ends?

Are you questioning the reality of it? Remember this, we were placed in the family where God was determined to put us.

We live in a day when men think that they can determine life and both birth and death and what a bold affront that is to almighty God.

Oh, yes, but remember this, we're not born of the flesh and blood or the will of man, but being born of God.

[17 : 23] And therefore, my friend, all the lost people that were destined to be born into this world will be born.

Oh, yes, what a wonderful truth that is, that his sovereign love and sovereign grace could never be hampered or prevented in any way whatsoever.

It is indeed the precious thoughts that it is he that makes a rebel a child. my friend, many rubbles there may be at this time running loose amongst us, but my friend, oh, how precious are the thoughts.

There's not one that is beyond the saving power and grace of almighty God. I say, how precious are those thoughts.

Have we not sometimes very solemn and somber thoughts concerning ourselves and concerning others.

[18 : 42] How precious are those thoughts towards us that he should bring us in humble prayer before his feet.

Where have you been in this past week? Where have you been throughout this year or the last year? My friend, how precious are those thoughts.

The Lord does know and he hears the cry of his dear people who pour out their soul unto him.

how precious are those thoughts. I have not improved and I cannot improve on my prayers.

A common phrase in the day in the religious world, in the day in which we live, is you'll have to pray harder. My friend, I do wonder sometimes whether such people know anything about prayer at all.

[19 : 56] Whether they find themselves whispering, stammering, groaning, longing, or to be found close to the throne of grace. Feel indeed so inadequate in prayer.

Feel indeed almost hypocritical in coming into prayer. Pharisaical old friend, yet how precious are those thoughts.

Though, though, I am so unable to express myself and to address the holy majesty of God in right words, yet, my friend, how precious are those thoughts.

That Jesus looks upon his people still. He is their great high priest above, ever ready, ever able to intercede for them.

And thus, my friend, to present my case and your case before the holy majesty of God.

[21 : 11] God, you know, there is no higher court than that. Others may be contemplating taking us to court or to bring powers against us to try us and to intimidate us.

But, my friends, our mercy is this. There is one, there is one, that is able to supersede all others and it is that court in heaven.

He knows, my friend, your substance. He knows your weakness and inability by nature and he knows the forces that may be set to come against you.

But, my friend, remember this, how the Lord dealt with Gideon with the great armies that were raiding them and laying them low as a nation.

A great company was gathered but, my friends, they were reduced down to 300 men and not the sort of men that Gideon would have chosen.

[22 : 35] how precious are his thoughts. The Lord knows who to send and who to go. Those that may not be in admiration of men but shall do his will and proclaim the truth with power and authority.

how precious are thy thoughts. My friend, I like those words in the epistle.

It is not of him that willest or of him that runneth but of God that showeth mercy. What substance, my friend, there is in that.

How precious are those thoughts. God that showeth mercy. Though I've got nothing, yet I possess all things, says the apostle.

How? Because of the love of Christ. Yea, and a secret and blessed love you yet still have of him.

[23 : 52] How precious are those thoughts. you can truly say, my Jesus has done all things well. Your next door neighbour, those close unto you, may well that I wouldn't change with him for anything.

Ah, my friend, we wouldn't envy the miser. We wouldn't envy those who have endless wealth.

but surely we would envy and covet those better gifts, and that is to be found dependent upon the Lord Jesus Christ to give and to do all things in you and for you.

What shall a man give in exchange for his soul? My friend, what can he give? When the soul indeed is condemned, his substance of his soul by nature is condemned.

How precious are his thoughts. When Jesus, my friend, he left his father's throne on high and came into this world, he knew exactly the need of all his people.

[25 : 28] Art thou in doubt this day of thy need? May then the Lord Jesus Christ show it to you, show it to you.

Peter, my friend, was in doubt of his need when he said, although all men should leave you and forsake you, yet not I.

I'll never leave you, I won't forsake you. But my friend, he was the first one to do it. I say, and you say, it may feel like, and that is just what I've done.

I've proved a complete failure. I have proved to be just what Jesus told me I could be.

Satan hath desired to have it me, to sift me as weed. But I have prayed for thee. Oh, I say, how precious are those thoughts.

[26 : 39] or do we cry at this time, Lord, remember me, pray for me, intercede for me.

But Lord, I see a glimpse of the future, but the majority of it is greatly withheld from me.

I'm bound to blunder, I'm sure to make so many mistakes. Lord, make me like a little child.

How precious are his thoughts. He says, except you become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Friend, is it not a transferring of weight and insufficiency to the Lord Jesus Christ, committing unto him and relying upon him to do all things for you.

[27 : 56] You must be tired of me using that text, come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you and learn of me how precious are thy thoughts. If you're tired of it, I am not.

But my friend, because I verily believe he is able to do for me which I cannot do for myself.

I'm sure of this, my hearers must say from time to time will help ascetic he is. I ask you, what sort of man do you call that?

Shall I tell you? a complete failure. But how precious. We cannot fail if Jesus is ours.

[29 : 09] Whatever the storm might be. My friend, we have thoughts of some whose counsel we have taken note of and have been very persuasive in their counsel and when events have followed it and when events have unfolded it was very the wrong thing to do.

And when we have said to them but this is, I took your advice on this matter. They will clearly say, well I didn't know, did I? And I often think to myself, if you didn't know, why did you open your mouth and speak with such authority and usurp your authority as you did.

Ah, my friend, how precious are his thoughts. He overrules all things, that we might cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils, that we might turn away from man, but turn to the Lord Jesus Christ.

How precious are his thoughts. He said, sinner, you have learnt one thing, you cannot rely upon man, but now begin, now begin today to learn of me.

Take my yoke upon you, I'll carry this matter with you. Oh, I say, it's not unequally yoked, it's a beautiful, it is a beautiful partnership, is it not, if I might put it that way?

[31 : 00] We who have no strength, he has all sufficient strength. Yeah, how precious are thy thoughts.

We have admired and loved those who we've summered and wintered with many years and have proved to be faithful loved ones and faithful friends.

There's one dear old friend, he often I shake hands and say goodbye, he always said, I hope our friendship as it lengthens, so it will strengthen.

and I believe he really means it and I think, oh, I wish I could really say the same, I want to friend.

But how precious are those thoughts of Jesus, they are so sublime, they're so great, they're so high, compared with any human, can you say that?

[32 : 08] oh, as in that union with him, increasing in knowledge of him, yes, it strengthens, does it not?

Why, has he ever failed you? Has he ever let you down? Any word that he has spoken to you, have you proved him to be deceitful to you?

Why, of course you have not. He is indeed an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile.

He said of Nathanael, he could detect it, he could recognize it, because he himself is so holy and so sincere in his holiness.

How precious are thy thoughts. My friends, we read this, the Lord Jesus Christ, that he was taken to the council, he was scourged indeed, he was stripped naked, he was mocked, ridiculed, and forcibly accused.

[33 : 36] There was none with him. He surely did tread the winepress alone. None indeed could do the things that Jesus did.

And neither indeed can anybody do those things. That Jesus said he would do. That he would triumph over the enemies of his people.

And that will be in his own way and time. Who is this that cometh from Edom with dyed garments from Bosra.

He trampled his enemies. Oh my friend, we often forget that. That he is the great deliverer.

And why should he come down and so deliver his people from all their sins, from all their shame.

[34 : 45] how precious, how precious are they thoughts unto me. Why does Jesus ever forgotten or overlooked anything that was necessary when his thoughts are so precious.

He brings his people to himself in his own way and time. May the Lord add his blessing to these few remarks.

Amen.